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MESSAGE

FROM THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

COMMUNICATING

TRANSLATIONS OF LETTERS

FROM

THE MINISTER OF SPAIN

TO

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

Received since the Message of the 9th instant.

MAY 12, 1820.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the table.

WASHINGTON :

PRINTED BY GALES & SEATON.

1820.

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES:

I communicate to Congress translations of letters from the Minister of Spain to the Secretary of State, received since my Message of the 9th instant.

JAMES MONROE.

Washington, 12th May, 1820.

LIST OF PAPERS

**WITH THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE OF TWELFTH MAY, 1820, TO
BOTH HOUSES OF CONGRESS.**

General Vives to the Secretary of State, 9th May, 1820. Translation.

Same to the same, 10th May, 1820, with a proclamation of the King of Spain. Translations.

Same to the same, 11th May, 1820. Translation.

General Vives to the Secretary of State.

[TRANSLATION.]

SIR: In answer to your note of yesterday's date, I have, in the first place, to give you the explanation requested of me, of the import of my last proposal; and, in doing so, to repeat, in other words, that I am authorized solemnly to promise to this government the ratification of the treaty by his Majesty only in case the third point of my proposals be satisfied; but, as the answer given to this point has not been such as I could, agreeably to my instructions, receive as satisfactory, I can, by no means, commit myself by giving a greater extension to my promise than that expressed in my note.

My object in intimating to you that, although I knew nothing officially, yet I considered as authentic the information circulating of an important change in the government of Spain, a circumstance which would, of itself, effectually prevent me from giving greater latitude to my promise, was, to apprize your government, that, as, by the adoption of the constitution of 1812 in Spain, the powers of the King would be limited, it would no longer depend on his Majesty alone to fulfil my solemn promise, admitting that my instructions had empowered me to give such a promise; so that my sole motive for offering a remark upon that topic was, to strengthen the grounds on which my proposal was founded; and, further, to enable your government so to appreciate as no longer to decline assenting to it.

I shall, on this occasion, wave all reply to the arguments again advanced by you, in extenso, upon the question of his Majesty's obligation to ratify the treaty, and confine myself to a single remark; namely, that all the authorities cited by you lay down the peace and happiness of mankind in general, and of states and their respective people in particular, as a fundamental principle. And having, in my first note, shown the notoriously hostile disposition prevailing throughout the Union towards the interests of the Spanish monarchy, it necessarily follows, that, when the objects of treaties are not obtained, the ratification of that of 22d February, 1819, would, in like manner, become illusory; and, therefore, that his Majesty's motives for suspending it, were founded upon a competent view of evident facts.

I shall also leave it to the general sense of the reflecting part of mankind to decide, whether the reasoning you rely on in stating the motives of the American government for proposing to other powers to acknowledge the revolted provinces of Spanish America, and in exhibiting them as favorable, not only to suffering humanity, but to the interests of Spain herself, be not, in the highest degree, specious; for, if such maxims were to be adopted, nations could no longer count up-

on the integrity of their possessions, or upon the maintenance of that mutual amity and good understanding which it is equally their duty and their interest to cultivate in their relations with each other.

I have the honor to offer you anew the assurances of my distinguished consideration; and I pray God long to preserve you.

FRANCISCO DIONISIO VIVES.

Washington, 9th May, 1820.

General Don Francisco Dionisio Vives to the Secretary of State.

[TRANSLATION.]

SIR: In conformity with the orders I have this moment received from my Government, I have the honor to inform you, that his Catholic Majesty hath sworn to the political Constitution of the Spanish Monarchy, as sanctioned by the Extraordinary Cortes in 1812, and to enclose a printed copy of his Majesty's manifest to the nation; for the purpose of giving the President a just view of the noble and generous sentiments which actuate the august mind of the King.

Please to accept the renewed assurances of my perfect consideration, and my wish that God may preserve you many years.

FRANCISCO DIONISIO VIVES.

Washington, 10th May, 1820.

Gazette Extraordinary of Madrid.

Sunday, March 12, 1820.

OFFICIAL ARTICLE.

PROCLAMATION OF THE KING TO THE NATION.

Spaniards! When, by your heroic efforts, you succeeded in terminating a captivity in which I was detained by the most unheard of perfidy, every thing I saw and was informed of, on my entering into my native land, conspired to persuade me that the nation wished to see revived its ancient form of government; and this persuasion must have decided me to conform myself with the general wish of a magnanimous people, who, vanquisher of a foreign enemy, feared the still more dreadful evils of intestine divisions.

I was, however, well aware that the rapid progress of civilization in Europe; the universal diffusion of knowledge, even among the lower classes; the most frequent intercourse with the different parts of the globe; and the wonderful events of the present era; have given rise to ideas and desires unknown to our forefathers, which imperiously demand the most energetic measures in the government. I also knew well that it was indispensable that the political institutions should agree with such principles, thereby to obtain that harmony between the people and the laws, on which the stability and peace of society so much depend.

But, while I was maturely planning, with the solicitude of my paternal heart, the changes to be effected in our fundamental administration, more suitable to the national character and to the present state of the different provinces of the Spanish monarchy, and also more analogous to an enlightened nation, you have let me know your wishes for the re-establishment of the constitution proclaimed at Cadiz, in the year 1812, amidst the bustle of arms, and while, to the astonishment of the world, you were fighting for the liberty of your country. I have listened to your desires, and, as a loving father, I have condescended to grant what my children thought most conducive to their happiness. I have sworn to that constitution for which you longed, and I will always be its firmest supporter. I have already taken the most effectual measures for the immediate convocation of the Cortes. In them, and united to your representatives, I will make it my glory to concur in the great work of national prosperity.

Spaniards! Your glory is my only ambition. The desire of my heart is to see you all united and happy round my throne. Trust, then, to your King, who addresses you with that sincere effusion of his soul, which the circumstances in which you are, and a sense of the high duty imposed upon him by Providence, inspire him with. Your happiness will henceforth depend, in a great measure, upon yourselves. Do not suffer yourselves to be seduced by the deceitful appearances of a chimerical happiness, which often prevents the attaining of real bliss. Allow not your passions to be exalted, as they are wont to make enemies of those who ought always to live as brothers, and be as unanimous in their wishes as they are in the possession of one religion, the speaking of one language, and the conforming to the same manners and customs. Repel the perfidious insinuations so artfully disguised by your enemies. Let us conform ourselves strictly to the constitution, as I, myself, will be the first to do, and let us shew to Europe a pattern of wisdom, order, and perfect moderation, in a crisis which, in other nations, has been accompanied by scenes of blood-shed and havoc. Let us make the Spanish name admired and respected, at the same time that we establish forever our happiness and our glory.

At the Palace, Madrid, March 10, 1820.

FERDINAND.

[From the National Press.]

General Don Francisco Dionisio Vives to the Secretary of State.

[TRANSLATION.]

SIR: Among the documents transmitted with the President's Message to both Houses of Congress, and published in this day's National Intelligencer, I have seen, with surprise, the letter of Mr. Gallatin, stating, that I positively told him, that "I could, in case of an arrangement, give satisfactory security to the United States, and that it would consist in consenting that they should take immediate possession of Florida, without waiting for the ratification of the treaty." Although I have with all frankness proved, in my correspondence with you, that I had no such authority, and that it will not, under any view which may be taken, appear presumable, that I made so doubtful, so useless, and inconsiderate a disclosure, I request, however, that you will be pleased to communicate this to the President, in order that, by giving publicity to this document, it may be understood that I made no such proposal, either to Mr. Gallatin, or to Baron Pasquier.

I renew to you, Sir, the assurances of my respect, and distinguished consideration; and I pray God to preserve you many years.

FRANCISCO DIONISIO VIVES.

Washington, 11th May, 1820.